

## Race floats their boat



Cobham celebrates crossing the finishing line first in the whale boat race in this year's Brathay Challenge. Full story, page 10

Monday, June 17, 2013  
[www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk)

Nic Dakin MP interview



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Campus round-up



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inside...

# Physical and verbal abuse exposed

Rebecca Cooney  
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The Skills Funding Agency has demanded "immediate action to safeguard the welfare of all trainees" at a Midland-based provider after Ofsted reported physical and verbal bullying, harassment and exploitation.

The education watchdog's inspection of National Farrier Training Agency (NFTA), in Peterborough, claimed learners suffered at the hands of approved training farriers (ATFs) and "in a small minority of cases by college trainers".

The report, which downgraded the NFTA (which teaches the shoeing of horses and similar animals) from good to inadequate, said: "Examples of bullying and exploitation of apprentices in the workplace are not identified or resolved adequately by the care, support and guidance provided by the NFTA."

"In the worst cases, apprentices receive verbal abuse and are required to carry out tasks that are humiliating or are not in any way related to the requirements of the apprenticeship."

"In other cases, ATFs use the apprentices' fear of losing their employment to make unreasonable demands about their working conditions."

The report continued: "Serious allegations of physical and verbal bullying and harassment by ATFs are not investigated effectively."

An agency spokesperson said it had been in talks with the NFTA and the Farriers' Registration Council (FRC) — the accountable body — over Ofsted's findings.

"Although the inspection report did not name individual learners, the agency insisted that the FRC and NFTA take immediate action to safeguard the welfare of all trainees even before the report was published," she said.

Ofsted found evidence of

- **Bullying**
- **Harassment**
- **Exploitation**
- **Humiliation**

"The FRC and NFTA contacted all learners to remind them of their rights and the means by which they could safely raise concerns about their treatment. Similar action is being taken to remind ATFs of their responsibilities."

"The agency sought and received specific assurances from the colleges delivering the off-the-job assessment that their arrangements to protect learners were robust, transparent and understood."

She added: "No new learners can be recruited until this longer-term plan is agreed."

"The agency is working closely with the FRC, NFTA and other stakeholders to ensure the issues identified are addressed effectively for the benefit of learners."

Ofsted also reported that the 400-apprentice NFTA, its board and the FRC had "been ineffective in applying a coherent strategy that will rationalise the numbers of farriers trained in future years, despite the calls for such work from many registered farriers and a number of stakeholder bodies".

An NFTA spokesperson said: "Measures have already been put in place to reassure all apprenticeship learners of the zero tolerance to all instances of bullying and harassment, and that immediate action will be taken by the NFTA against any who do not meet the highest standards."

"The FRC and NFTA also stressed their strong commitment on behalf of all involved in farriery training to the implementation of the improvements highlighted in the report as they give all concerned the opportunity to review the provision, structure and content of the farriery training programme so that it retains its reputation for the highest standards of equine welfare in the world."

The NFTA has three subcontractors — Herefordshire College of Technology, Myerscough College and Warwickshire College, according to Ofsted.

Herefordshire principal Ian Peake said it had "limited" involvement with the learners.

A Myerscough College statement said it was "concerned" by the report and "supportive" of its recommendations and had a "zero tolerance approach to bullying".

A Warwickshire College spokesperson said Ofsted and the NFTA had said the accusations did not relate to its training.

See editorial on page 4



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Edition 70

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# Audit office examines agency’s performance

Chris Henwood

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Officials from the National Audit Office are investigating the Education Funding Agency to “consider whether it is prepared to meet future challenges”.

The investigation into the Department for Education’s (DfE) delivery agency for funding and compliance is underway with a report due in the autumn.

An audit office spokesperson said: “The agency distributed more than £50bn in 2012-13 to local education providers in England to fund education and training for learners aged 3 to 19 — 3 to 25 for those with learning difficulties. “The agency is also responsible for the oversight of financial management and govern-

ance in open academies, and for major capital programmes in the education sector. “Our report will examine the performance of the agency to date, and consider whether it is prepared to meet future challenges.”

The spokesperson declined to comment further.

The agency was formed on April 1 last year when the functions of two non-departmental public bodies, the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) and Partnerships for Schools, were brought together.

The agency was also investigated by the audit office last year, with a report published in November called Managing the expansion of the Academies Programme.

It said: “The YPLA and the agency have experienced difficulties meeting staffing requirements for administering funding and

monitoring academies’ financial management and governance.”

The latest investigation comes as the audit office launched a report — Financial management in government — calling for more spending control within government departments.

Amyas Morse, head of the audit office, said: “Finance teams in departments and other public bodies have a vital role to play if the government is to deliver the planned public service reform.

“Finance managers are now being taken more seriously and playing a more central role in the efforts to provide sustainable services at lower cost.

“Savings are being made but progress in restructuring how services are being delivered is lagging.

“If the challenge of reforming the delivery of public services is to be met, then the Treasury and Finance Leadership group need to provide more effective impetus to strengthen financial management capability across government.”

An agency spokesperson declined to comment on the latest audit office investigation, which comes just over a year after a committee of MPs said DfE needed to keep a closer eye on its spending.

A report of the Public Accounts Committee concluded: “The department needs to do more work to clearly define how funding streams will be monitored, audit arrangements, and processes to support whistle-blowers.”

The DfE said at the time that steps had been taken to improve accountability.

“The DfE and agency challenge academies if they believe funds are being spent inappropriately,” said a spokesperson.

## FE Week news in brief

### FE loans applications

Government figures have revealed that during May there were 2,477 applications for the new 24+ Advanced Learning Loans.

They also show that around 75 per cent of the applications were from females and that 1,670 of the overall applications had been processed.

The latest update, issued by the Data Service on June 13, also had information, not previously released by government, on whether applicants were studying A-levels or Access to higher education, among others.

Meanwhile, the largest amount of applications received (1,175) from was in the 24 to 30 age band.

### Fis instead of Skifs

Changes to the provider funding system that will bring a host of new acronyms have been revised already.

The Skills Funding Agency’s simplification programme will replace current systems with new “streamlined arrangements” in which Skifs (Skills Funding System), which had been planned to replace Lis (Learner Information Suite), has now been renamed Fis (Funding Information System).

### Unemployment fall

The number of unemployed young people has fallen 60,000 on last year to 950,000, according to government figures.

In February to April 2013, youth unemployment (those aged 16 to 24) was also down 43,000 on the previous quarter.

The unemployment rate for the age group was 20.5 per cent — down 0.7 per cent compared with the previous quarter and 1.2 per cent lower than a year ago.

# Funding rates still a sector concern

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

Concerns remain about a Skills Funding Agency policy aimed at “smoothing” the impact of its new payment regime, despite it ditching plans to cut provider earnings rates by up to 25 per cent or more.

The agency wanted to introduce protection measures for colleges and training providers to stop earnings rocketing or nosediving in the next academic year.

Providers have been given a number — a ‘transition factor’ — that indicates how much of their budget under the new system they can keep.

A factor of 1.1 would increase a provider’s earnings rate by 10 per cent, while 0.9 would indicate a cut of 10 per cent — meaning that it had to do more work for the same money.

But the agency stepped away from factors that would result in earnings rate cuts just days after FE Week reported on worries within the sector. The agency said such factors would now be “reset” to 1.

The move was welcomed by the 157 Group, but concerns remain that the agency could still reduce earnings rates with policy wording that

states: “We reserve the right to adjust your factor where we have evidence that it is no longer suitable from your ILR submissions or because of the change to your offer in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014.”

Peter Roberts, 157 Group chair, said: “We welcome the quick response by the agency regarding the concerns expressed by colleges over potential implications of the transition factor and confirmation that each college’s 2013/14 allocation remains unaffected.

“We will still need to ensure that the notion the agency ‘reserves the right to adjust your factor’ does not become a mandate to reduce rates at any time in the future without the careful dialogue needed.”

An agency spokesperson said: “We will reset the factors in the way we have communicated and only review that position on a case-by-case basis.”

The agency dropped its plans for cutting earnings rates after FE Week reported a Joint Information Systems Committee online forum for college finance directors in which one provider revealed its rates under the new system would be cut by 25 per cent.

“I can’t imagine that colleges are going to take this lying down,” said one forum member. And at least one independent training pro-



## Late funding rates ‘unacceptable’

Skills Funding Agency announces transition factors, hitting provider rates by more than 30 per cent

How FE Week first broke the transition factor news

vider had been given a transition factor below 0.7, FE Week understands.

But the agency dropped its plans after what it described as “feedback”.

“As part of the consultation process, we wrote to providers setting out their individual transition factor,” said the agency spokesperson.

“We asked for feedback on any implications or concerns as soon as possible. The feedback

from the sector has been very helpful.

“It was clear that there would be a number of unintended consequences.

“As a result we have reset the transitional factor for those providers where earnings would have been reduced as a result of the transitional arrangement.”

She added: “We would like to stress that the 2013/2014 allocation is entirely unaffected by the transition arrangements.”

# Research looks at dip in part-time HE in FE

Rebecca Cooney

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The Association of Colleges and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) are backing research into the delivery of part-time higher education courses in FE colleges.

The £246,000 programme will aim to identify barriers in recruitment to part-time degree level courses in colleges, which has been declining for the past six years. It fell nearly 40 per cent in the 2012/13 academic year.

It will also identify barriers to the expansion of higher education in colleges and make recommendations on how colleges can be enabled and supported to develop their higher education offering.

Nick Davy, the association’s higher education manager, said: “This is a significant research programme and will be crucial to widening our understanding of the underlying causes for the recent decline in part-time higher education numbers, improve colleges’ market intelligence, and inform future policymaking to expand college higher education and support strategic objectives, such as achieving degree-awarding powers.”

A statement from the association suggested that the decline could be due to the introduction and limited promotion of 24+ loans, reduced employer training budgets and the uneven spread of part-time courses.

It also suggested that younger students might have poor regard for this form of study.

Universities and Science Minister David Willetts said: “This is an important study that will help us in our drive to create a more diverse sector with more opportunities for part-time or accelerated courses, distance learning and higher level vocational study. “FE students studying higher level qualifications are more likely than university students to be over 25, part-time and come from areas with low rates of participation in higher education.

“So it is vital that we understand what more can be done to get FE colleges to increase their higher education offer.”

Mr Davy agreed, saying: “Higher education is a core priority for many of our member colleges, the majority of which provide undergraduate and postgraduate level courses.

“The college higher education offer is distinctive in that it offers cost-effective courses close to home and has a strong track record in widening participation to people from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have thought university was for them.”

The two-year project will be carried out by the centre for widening participation policy studies at the University of East London Continuum, which has expertise in higher vocational education.

Professor John Storan, director of Continuum, said: “This research will address both the reasons for the downturn in part-time higher education college participation and examine the factors which impact on the expansion of higher education capacity within colleges.”

# Polytechnics proposed

Rebecca Cooney

@RebeccaKCooney

A thinktank has called on the government to bring back polytechnics, abolished by the Conservatives in 1992.

The report of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, published by the Institute for Public Policy Research, suggests that large FE colleges, where most students are on higher education courses, could be eligible for polytechnic status. Association of Colleges’ deputy chief executive Gill Clipson (pictured) welcomed the report’s “recognition of the distinctive role colleges play in advanced and higher vocational study”.

But she added: “It is debatable as to whether the reintroduction of the title polytechnic for some larger colleges with degree-awarding powers will send out the desired signal about the importance of vocational study. This is a question not so much about an institution’s title but of the value placed upon the distinctive, specialist, high-quality provision already on offer.”

She said as autonomous bodies, colleges would make up their minds individually.

The commission’s chair and vice-chancellor of the University of Warwick, Nigel Thrift, argued that “a different title would protect a distinctive role for higher vocational learning that was lost in 1992”.

“[It] would be a mark of vocational excellence that would send out wider signals about the importance of vocational learning . . . and would signal that the university title and the university route are not the only form of high status in our system.”

The report also recommended the introduction of £5,000 fee-only degrees, focused on vocational learning, for local students who would not be eligible for maintenance loans.

It also suggested a student premium of £1,000 for each student from a low participation area, or those previously eligible for free school meals.

Miss Clipson said: “The introduction of new £5,000 ‘fee-only’ degrees... would be a welcome opportunity for colleges.”

She warned the number of places available should not be constrained as the qualifications would create the skills for economic growth.

She added that “one of the recognised strengths of colleges delivering higher education is their ability to widen participation” and said for this reason the AoC supported the £1,000 student premium.

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said the report was “a useful contribution to the debate” on maintaining and improving the reputation of UK universities.

He added: “However, the alternative undergraduate funding models that are discussed would cost more for families, taxpayers and graduates while doing nothing to improve the student experience.”

# Careers report ‘ducks’ funding issues

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

A report that called for a “culture change” on careers guidance has been criticised for shying away from “difficult underlying issues”.

The National Careers Council’s first report, An Aspirational Nation: Creating a culture change in careers provision, featured seven recommendations including a significant expansion in the work of the National Careers Service (NCS).

“A culture change is needed in careers provision for young people and adults to address the mismatch of skills shortages and high unemployment,” said the report, launched earlier this month.

The report of the council, set up by the government in May last year, also called for face-to-face careers guidance to be available to all pupils from the age of 12 (Year 8); and for all students to have a planned progression route upon leaving school. A further recommendation was the creation of an employer-led NCS advisory board.

However, former council members Professor Tony Watts and Heather Jackson distanced themselves from the report, claiming it ducked the issue of funding.

The duo issued a joint statement that said: “We consider the report’s conspicuous omissions represent a major missed opportunity; a reluctance to address the difficult underlying issues, and a level of acquiescence with current government policies with which we would not wish to be associated.”

A council spokesperson said: “Our report acknowledged that to expand the NCS to support schools, young people and parents, would require resourcing . . . it is for the government to respond as to how this may be achieved.”

The duo walked out on the council early last month in a row over a draft of the report that went before Skills Minister Matthew Hancock.

Their damning resignation statement said the draft proposed a rebalancing of funding that allowed the Department for Education (DfE) “to escape its responsibilities”.

They claimed it suggested adult funding from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) — which funded the NCS with £83m in contrast to £7m from the DfE — might be used to pay for young people’s careers guidance.

Their statement on the published report said the issue had not been corrected. “Most of the recommendations are directed not to the government but to the NCS, without any attention to how its new responsibilities are to be funded and built into NCS contracts in an accountable way,” said their statement.

The council spokesperson added: “We felt it was not appropriate to demand additional money from the DfE. It was more our task to set out the case as to why career provision was important and to make the argument to government as to why it should give this area high priority.”

Meanwhile, the council’s recommendation of an employer-led NCS advisory board was described by 157 Group executive director Lynne Sedgmore as a “positive development”.





Editor’s comment

Invaluable inspection

The Ofsted inspection report on the National Farrier Training Agency demonstrates just how valuable the independent inspectorate can be.

Had the government relied on recruitment and achievement statistics, it seems highly unlikely the ‘physical and verbal bullying’ would ever have been exposed.

Inspectors visited the provider, spoke to staff and learners and established a shocking picture of mistreatment.

The report does not pull its punches and as a result action is being taken, including by the three colleges that subcontract provision.

So, the lesson to be learned?

Ofsted inspections are uniquely placed to look beyond the numbers, and at times nothing else could be more important.

Nick Linford, editor

Correction

Coverage of VQ Day events in last week’s newspaper made mention of late tutor Maria O’Boyle.

She was posthumously awarded the innovator of the year title at the City & Guilds Lion Awards.

It was given for her unique methods of teaching and caring guidance with Skills for Work and Life at Derry Youth & Community Workshop.

“Maria worked tirelessly for the rights of learners and engaged many who were failed by the education process,” said a City & Guilds spokesperson.

“Her innovation and originality in teaching allowed her to reach learners in a unique way.”

The FE Week news piece incorrectly referred to her as ‘Mary’. FE Week would like to apologise for any distress caused by the inaccuracy.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk) with Corrections in the subject line.



Colleges miss out on traineeship cash

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

Colleges look set to miss out on £12m handed over to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for traineeships, FE Week can reveal.

The Department for Education (DfE) has transferred the cash to agency coffers to pay specific traineeship providers through their 16 to 18 apprenticeship contracts.

The ring-fenced funding has been made available for next year to providers who only hold agency contracts, mostly private training providers.

The extra funding will not be on offer to providers with Education Funding Agency (EFA) contracts, so bypassing most colleges.

The revelation was set out in EFA letters sent to providers rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. They say: “If you hold a contract or funding agreement with the EFA only, or a contract with the EFA and a contract with the SFA for 16 to 18 apprenticeships, you will be funded to deliver by the EFA through your existing EFA contract and through the numbers included in your lagged student numbers.”

A DfE spokesperson said current funding was expected to cover traineeship costs for

those with EFA contracts because the programme would “replace other level one and two programmes” that were already funded.

However, Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive at the Association of Colleges, said he wanted to see colleges get “similar opportunities” to the private training providers.

He also wanted the traineeship age limit lifted. Currently, only people aged 16, 17 or 18 on August 31 in the relevant funding year will be able to become trainees, along with young people up to the age of 25 with learning difficulty assessments.

“Traineeships will start at the same time as the new approach to study programmes so 2013-14 will be a complicated year,” said Mr Gravatt.

“We believe that traineeships will work well if they are strongly linked to apprenticeships so we are relaxed about DfE finding a short-term fix to allow independent providers to claim funding, but we’ll be pressing to ensure colleges with strong apprenticeship programmes have similar opportunities.

“The bigger issue, though, is to ensure that trainees are able to support themselves and to remove the current age cap.”

The DfE spokesperson said: “We need to make sure that vocational training is high

quality, rigorous and meeting the needs of today’s employers.

“Any good or outstanding providers — whether contracted through the EFA or the SFA — will be funded to offer young people traineeships.

“This investment of £12m . . . will mean that the SFA’s best apprenticeship providers will now be able to offer young people traineeships as well.

“Any good or outstanding providers with an EFA contract will also be able to deliver traineeships, with the costs covered by current funding as we expect traineeships to replace other level one and two programmes.

“Where they recruit additional students, providers under a contract will be funded, while any grant-funded providers will receive an increased allocation next year.”

A spokesperson for the Association of Employment and Learning Providers said: “We welcome this money, but we’ll need more. Further funding will also be required if the programme is expanded from 19 to 24.”

An SFA spokesperson said: “Providers of 16 to 18 apprenticeships that only hold a contract with us will receive a ring-fenced budget, alongside their funding allocations received for 2013/14, to deliver the traineeship offer.”

Comment

Older apprentices taking 16 to 18-year-old places

It is really depressing that despite all the actions of each government we are still in the position where most of our young people are not leaving school with the right attitude to impress employers. Where they do impress (and I feel like a stuck record), it is because of real work experience (provided by a minority of schools for a minority of their pupils and not really captured by anyone nationally) or by virtue of a 14 to 16 vocational course in conjunction with a college or training provider (something that will be virtually extinct next year because of changes in policy).

Phil Hatton

Apprenticeships now have to be undertaken by people who are in employment. It’s a DEMAND thing, not a SUPPLY thing. The number of paid hours of employment is in decline. We are in a recession. There will be no growth in the UK economy for the next 10 years unless it is artificially stimulated. Declining 16 to 18 apprenticeships should be no surprise to anyone, nor should a switch to employers favouring 19 to 24 year olds. The economy is no longer designed to meet the needs of training providers.

Albert Wright

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FE Week profile

# Nic Dakin ~ his story

Eleanor Radford  
@EleanorRadford

The MP for Scunthorpe and member of the Education Select Committee talks to FE Week

It's not easy to lead 2,500 students and 250 staff, head up hundreds of local authority staff or train to be an accountant. Yet Nic Dakin has done all three. The 57-year-old has also taught English for 30 years, spent four years as principal at John Leggott College in Scunthorpe and was North Lincolnshire council leader during time out from education. MP for Scunthorpe since 2010, he is a member of the Education Select Committee, works with 20 all-party parliamentary groups and champions campaigns such as No Free Lunch, which is pushing for free meals for disadvantaged students in FE and sixth-form colleges to bring them on a par with their peers in schools. "My wife would say I work too hard," says Dakin who met other half Audrey during his secondary school days in Birstall, Leicestershire.

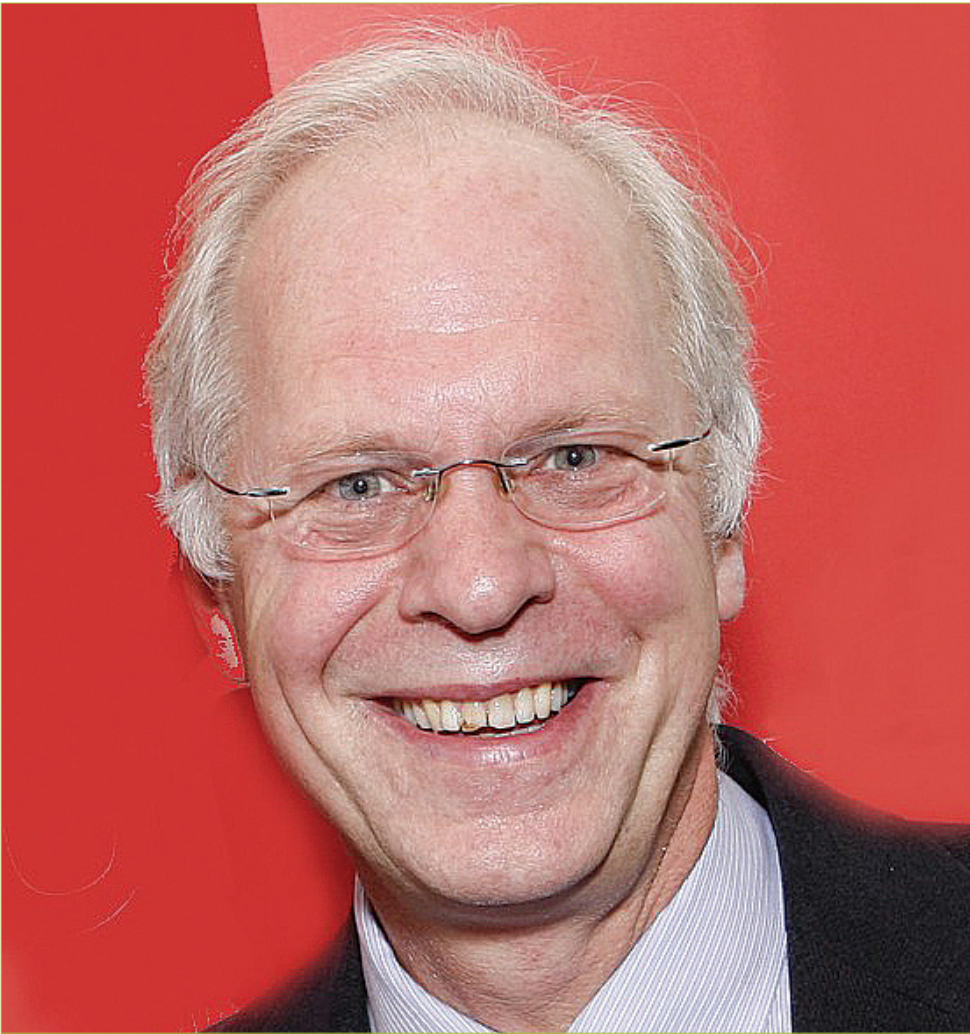
"But there are always things to do. Perhaps that comes from an upbringing of trying to do things as well as possible, and an ingrained working-class approach to work." He is clearly driven by a determination to see equality and opportunity for all, although he is the first to admit that his journey has been "random" with no strict game plan. "You get a job, do it to the best of your ability, and then another comes along," he says. "I would just like to see those who struggle the most with very low incomes, and whose lives are very challenging, have more opportunities — the same as those who drift through life in a privileged way." Dakin was attracted to politics because he wanted to try to "make a difference". And education is key, he says. "Tony Blair's 'education, education, education' resonates with me . . . politicians should trust educators more. It's important to challenge and to hold to account, but forever changing things is not the best way to get the best for the young people of this country," says Dakin. In Finland and Singapore, countries with education systems often pointed to as very successful, he says there is a "consensus across political parties that they don't forever change things".

"They have a long-term view; their secretaries of state don't think they know best what the history curriculum should be," says Dakin, who studied history at the University of Hull before completing his PGCE at King's College London. (He'd earlier studied accountancy, but gave it up after a year in favour of teaching.) "This meddling of politicians, particularly the case with the current leadership, could

debilitate schools and colleges. There needs to be a mechanism locally for people in FE to crack on with less interference. Local government is obsessed with what it can measure — why not just trust people a little more?"

Should local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) have more influence in education? He says more resources deployed in partnership with the LEP at local colleges would allow it to be more responsive to what businesses need. "I've chaired a skills commission for the Humberside LEP and it's been interesting listening to what businesses have been saying — they want schools and colleges producing people with good literacy, numeracy and employability skills. It seems fairly simple. "In the Humber we are hoping that jobs will take off in the renewables' industry. There are some major planning applications through Siemens and Able UK that ought to bring tens of thousands of jobs to the region." But how will people be prepared for these jobs? "Give LEPs a bit more purchase on what they're asking of FE and schools and colleges, and FE will deliver," insists Dakin, who had his first teaching job at Greatfield High School, a "tough" secondary in Hull. He says campaigns such as the Association of College's No Free Lunch illustrate the way FE is treated differently from the rest of education.

"It's not fair and it discriminates against young people who choose to go to FE post-16," he says. "I've done a lot to champion the role and quality of further education, particularly sixth-form colleges, where I worked most of my career. "They have done a cracking job over the years but are still a Cinderella in the system. Funding for 16 to 18-year-olds has really been squeezed and is hitting these colleges hard . . . if this continues, we might have to question whether they will be able to maintain the quality of their work." Dakin, who has two daughters and a son, grew up in rural Leicestershire, the eldest of three boys and a girl. His father was a clicker in the shoe industry, his mother a nurse, who retrained to be a teacher. Both his parents came from large families and were, he says, "intelligent, working-class people who were focused on education, behaving properly and good values. They were



not materialistic at all. "The things that I think are important are pretty similar, so I suppose the way you're brought up does leave an indelible mark on you." Does he feel that this influenced his leadership style? "The skill is getting the best out of everybody else," he says. "My view is that the leader's job is to be clear about where you're going. And there's no point in charging off on your own — you have to get the best out of your team and take them with you. You have to value people." He says that when he was principal he would walk around the college every day to meet staff and to see what they were doing. "I would challenge them to make sure that they continued to improve, but I would recognise and celebrate their successes as well," he says. "Sometimes in this country we're not very good at saying thank you. It doesn't

take much but can be very motivating to hear someone say that." He says of all his roles, he enjoyed being principal most, "directly impacting on lives and seeing opportunities made" for young people. "Working with young people is exhilarating," he says. "It's never dull. The challenges come from being in charge of any organisation. In the college there were 2,400 students, 250 staff and a multi-million pound budget. The challenges were diverse and constant." As well as education, he is also passionate about the environment — sustainable housing, conservation and wildlife — partly inspired by the two years that he spent in Scandinavia teaching English as a foreign language. "It was an adventure and I realised that things could always be different," says Dakin of his time in Gavle, Sweden. "The Swedes did things in different ways and we saw the world in a different way. Their interest and enthusiasm for the environment was overwhelming."

For now, though, he remains committed to representing Scunthorpe. "The one test for me is whether my constituents think I've done a good job," explains Dakin. "We have to face the electorate and convince them we can run the economy better than the Conservatives. "We've got to be clear where we're taking the country — tackle the squeeze on living standards and make sure people can succeed, wherever they're from."

FE Week Experts

## Keeping up the good work

Now that Learning and Skills Improvement Service funding has ended, the Education Training Foundation must continue to support the Black Leadership Initiative, says chief executive Rajinder Mann.

Since 2002 the Network for Black Professionals' (NBP) Black Leadership Initiative (BLI) has worked in FE to address the under-representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff, especially in leadership roles. The work is a direct result of the Commission for Black Staff in Further Education, which identified the main barriers that BAME staff face in their FE careers. As the sector welcomes the Education Training Foundation, the NBP, and many of those who support its work, wonders how the BLI's work of the past 11 years will be supported now that LSIS funding has ended. With the change in demographics confirmed by last year's census, it is critical the sector continues funding the progression of BAME staff through targeted succession planning, ensuring that learners have the role models that they need. Our work has had a major impact in diversifying the FE workforce, as evidenced by the increase in the number of senior managers and leaders in colleges — up to 15 black principals compared with four in 2002.

All these principals have benefited from the NBP's activities; 13 have participated in the BLI programmes and, in turn, have supported aspirant BAME staff in the sector. The social return on investment from BLI sets a standard that no other part of the public sector can match. Currently, for example, the police service is lobbying for a change in the law to tackle its failure to recruit, retain and promote a representative workforce.

“How will the Black Leadership Initiative’s work of the past 11 years be supported now that LSIS funding has ended? ”

The BLI won the British Diversity Award in Education and, more recently, a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award for its mentoring scheme. It has been cited in a wide range of reports, as a model of good practice, and its success enabled us to develop the Ofsted shadowing programme in the schools sector

in partnership with the National College for Teaching and Learning. We have adapted the approach with the Women's Leadership Network and with the University of the Arts, London. This is a tried and tested approach with real impact. A third of college principals actively support the BLI, as do many chairs of governors who give their time freely as mentors and champions for equality. Its track record and reputation has the confidence and trust of BAME staff and the college sector, and represents a compelling case for a national strategy to build on its success. The risks of allowing this work to wither away for want of funding are clear — a loss of momentum and a failure to provide the representative workforce that our learners need and deserve. The NBP's approach has been to work with the sector in leading and promoting inclusivity and supporting the sector to define, deliver and assess its own standards for race equality. The case for diversity not only in the workplace but also at board levels was eloquently addressed at the recent Women's Leadership Network conference. There is an unanswerable case, to paraphrase the front cover of the commission's report, for the sector to continue leading the way by building on the good practice of the BLI and for the new Education and Training



Foundation to make good on its aim of 'promoting and championing equality and diversity across the sector' by funding its work.

Rajinder Mann OBE, chief executive, Network for Black Professionals

## Careers advice is an investment for life

A changing labour market makes the National Careers Service vital for both young people and adults in middle life, says David Hughes

An Aspirational Nation, the first report from the National Careers Council, comes at an opportune time. On the one hand, the Commons Education Select Committee has captured a cross-party consensus that careers education and support for children and young people has failed to improve since the demise of the patchy Connexions services. At the same time, unemployment, under-employment and a changing labour market mean that the need has never been greater for adults to have access to impartial information and advice about learning and careers.

The report is best discussed in two distinct but linked parts: the analysis and recommendations about what needs to be done for young people up to the age of 16, and the need to ensure that the National Careers Service (NCS) is doing all that it can to meet the needs of adults. Leaders from colleges and training providers, in particular, will know that devolving responsibility for independent guidance to schools has already generated a lot of debate, something that this report picks up on. For instance, I have lost count of the number of times I have heard the case for better engagement with employers, for ensuring

that advice is truly impartial and for careers advisers to better understand the new world of work. The report clearly sets these out. Achieving progress is not as easy, however, and it is clear that the report's writers felt frustrated that the NCS does not have a funded role in helping to implement change.

“By their late teens, young people need to have a good understanding of the world of work”

Careers education in schools and colleges must help to prepare people for adult life. By their late teens, young people need to have a good understanding of the world of work, their prospects, the role of learning throughout life and the resilience, adaptability and self-confidence that come with being a lifelong learner. I hope that the ministers responsible will engage in the debate about how best to improve the service for young people; the NCC report, the forthcoming Ofsted report, and others, provide good evidence on which to base policy changes. The NCC report has a number of ideas

about how best to improve careers support. I was particularly pleased to see reference to our pilot project, the mid-life career review, in which we are providing face-to-face and group support to 2,500 people in their 40s and 50s to help them to think about learning, jobs, and how they might prepare for retirement. A reference to the power of family learning to support adults into learning was also sensible and helpful. One critical issue is the need to allow the NCS to spend money on marketing; the lack of spend has resulted in an NCS that is over-reliant on referrals from a small range of agencies, which means that many adults are missing out. I cannot over-state the need for more adults to access the NCS. Our 2013 participation survey confirmed, once again, the key divide between those who left school as soon as they could and those who stayed on. Around one-half (49 per cent) of those who left full-time education aged 21-plus are learning, compared with just one-quarter (25 per cent) of those who left school at or before the age of 16. The survey also confirmed how being involved in learning is a key indicator of future intentions to learn. In the 2013 survey, 81 per cent of current learners said that they were likely to take up learning in the next three years, compared with 14 per cent of those who had done no learning since leaving full-time education. I hope that An Aspirational Nation has



helped to persuade the government to continue investment in the NCS as it prepares to announce its spending review plans.

David Hughes, chief executive, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education



# Making sense of the T word

The T word may strike fear into some work-based learning providers, but help is at hand to make sense of technology and to find out how it has benefited others, Stan Unwin

Provision of work-based learning (WBL) has some way to go in making the most of what advantages the (appropriate) use of technology can bring.

Some applications, like e-portfolios and virtual learning environments, are well known, but often misunderstood by providers and there is a range of supposed barriers that can affect an organisation’s willingness to explore.

For example, technology can be expensive, but it needn’t be. Money can easily be wasted on the purchase of inappropriate technology.

Technology can also be complicated, requiring technical knowledge, but again, it needn’t be. Lack of preparing staff adequately for what is proposed can be a bigger problem. A little bit of training at the right time works.

“Technology on its own will achieve nothing. It’s how and why the technology is to be introduced that will make the difference”

And technology may not be suitable for a particular sector; but there is usually an alternative that could work. It’s about knowing what the alternatives are.

What is needed more than anything else is a structured approach and a good measure of ‘joined-up thinking’.

Technology on its own will achieve nothing. It’s how and why the technology is to be introduced that will make the difference — and if the wrong technology is used in an inappropriate way the result may make things even worse.

One big factor that affects the wider take-up of effective technologies in the WBL sector is that this level of development often relies on there being the funding to support it.

Which leads nicely on to the opportunities presented by the Joint Information Systems Committee (Jisc) FE and Skills Development and Resources Programme.

Introduced last year, the programme offered sector providers and agencies the chance to



apply existing resources (from Jisc or elsewhere) to their work and adapt them for their needs; and to identify gaps in these resources or current uses for technology leading to the development of additional resources for the sector.

The programme has supported a number of successful projects nationally, some within WBL and two of which feature in our workshop. The success of these projects owes a lot to the early involvement and support of staff from the Jisc Regional Support Centres (RSCs), who were able to advise and guide both on the project aims and the technology to be used.

Both featured projects will provide other organisations in the sector with valuable feedback on what they have achieved and how they did it, the benefits that have been realised and the lessons that have been learned. Both will also demonstrate that a lot can be done within a modest budget.

An important feature of Jisc-funded projects is that resources developed and outcomes are shared within the FE and skills sector; providing useful information to others who may be planning a similar exercise.

Finding out what others have tried, their successes and failures, their costs and return on investment is invaluable to any provider thinking of taking the plunge.

Promotion within the WBL sector of this willingness to share and to work collaboratively is high on the Jisc RSC agenda. Much of the work already carried out within wider FE and skills to develop the use of technology is already benefiting WBL where much can be done to adapt and adopt ideas for application in a vocational/workplace setting

Jisc RSCs exist to support providers in their consideration, planning and implementation of technological development; to provide information and guidance that will assist in identifying what, how and when to use technology.

To be most effective this advice needs to be sought at the outset and that requires organisations to apply their thinking to the ‘what’ rather than the ‘how’. If you have an idea of your targets and what you would like to achieve that is the time to involve your Jisc RSC. We can then work with you to develop the most appropriate plan of action and the best use of technology.

Stan Unwin, WBL adviser, Jisc Regional Support Centre East Midlands

# Future shock? Why I want to be an FE principal

The 157 Group will next week publish the results of a project in which aspiring FE leaders across the sector envisage what the sector might look like in 2020, as Christine Doubleday explains

It seems that everyone has something to say about further education. We must get unemployed people into work; we must repair the economy; we have to cost less and make more; we have to specialise and have a general offer for everyone and every need; we must focus on industry sectors and on geographic regions and on partnerships and on sharing and collaboration and on competition. We must adopt the newest sparkly business methodologies to achieve efficiencies while ensuring that those with the greatest needs are welcomed and supported. We are told often of our failings and shortcomings and given feverish instructions on how we can make ourselves better.

And so sure are those who judge that often they do not allow a mere lack of evidence to get in the way of a doggedly held belief on opinion. Nor do they hold their horses while they are fact-finding or listening, instead charging in with another helpful insight or policy.

So, we decided to seek out opinions and beliefs — and be honest that they are just that. But they are not ill-informed opinions, nor are they from those outside looking in. They are from those actively working in this sector of ours, those who spend their waking hours making sense of what the learner wants and needs and how best to do it. They could be the leaders of our sector in 2020 and beyond.

“It was obvious that practitioners had distinctive features but that the heart of their work is common – we really do all care about the learner above and beyond everything else”

Our Delphi project is more structured than just asking a bunch of people what they think about the future. It gathers opinions from groups of people, synthesises those opinions, asks for votes on those opinions and comes up with most likely and least likely scenarios across a range of themes. From the beginning, we were clear that this project was led by 157 on behalf of the whole sector.

The work started with FE colleges but, very quickly, workshops for private, third sector and adult providers began. I was never sure



if we would end up with four separate reports on how practitioners in a certain part of the sector viewed their future or if it would be possible to find sufficient commonality to put together an overarching report. By the sixth and final workshop, it was obvious that practitioners had distinctive features but that the heart of their work is common — we really do all care about the learner above and beyond everything else.

We lighted upon five main themes: the economy; supply and demand of learning; technology; social inequality and public service reform. We gathered the fears and hopes for those themes and present in the report the most and least positive potential outcome for each. We explored the purpose and mission of FE and offer a framework of business strategies and models that could be adopted, depending on the primary purpose. Finally, we offer an insight into the needs of those working within the sector to give us a fighting chance of steering the positive path. The report is there to be useful, to stimulate debate and to offer a framework to explore and determine our own business strategies. We know our sector, we are honest about what we can do better and eager to find practical ways of doing so.

It offers a collective view of the possible futures for FE in 2020 and beyond. It is not a representative view, it does not pretend to be an expert view (except that all those involved are steeped in practice), it does not pretend to cover every inch of the sector. But it is the synthesised view of a range of people from across the sector who came together to tell us and each other what the world in 2020 might look like.

Most importantly, it shows that those who could be leading the sector are thoughtful, insightful and care deeply about what learners will need and want in the future. We present their views for you to use as you wish. I suggest that the voices of our practitioners should be listened to, heard and acted upon.

Christine Doubleday, deputy executive director 157 Group



Succession planning is a key leadership challenge. So perhaps it’s time that the sector looked beyond senior management and encouraged middle management and lecturers, says Nikki Gilbey

I am 27 and I want to be the principal of an FE college. I know that this is a long-term goal, as I am at the start of my teaching career. I also know that it is something that I will only achieve by setting a series of short-term targets.

## Stepping up to the challenge

Only one company can claim to have the official apprentice team of the year, but the benefits of the Brathay Apprentice Challenge go far beyond awarding a title, writes David Way

In just two years, the Brathay Apprentice Challenge has become one of the highlights of the apprenticeships, calendar. This year, plastics manufacturing firm Innovia Films beat joint second place teams, facilities management company Norse Group and 2012 winners Cobham, to the title.

But while the focus this week is on the winners, it would be wrong to think that the benefits of running the Brathay Apprentice Challenge stop there.

Supported by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), the challenge tests non-technical work skills and the personal attributes of competing apprentices.

The 90 teams that entered back in January have made well over 300 school visits. Some, such as Unilever, went into schools in South East England to encourage young people to consider higher apprenticeships instead of a university course.

East Midlands Housing Group apprentices passionately described how, as they were delivering their talks, teachers and parents (as well as young people) were visibly con-

When I attended the recent Gazelle Future Possible event (I’m an academic staff governor), I found myself surrounded by the principals of some of the best FE colleges in the country. They inspired me, all of them individuals whose lives were dedicated to improving the lives of others.

I am at the frontline of supporting students with a range of ages and abilities to achieve their goals and to widen opportunities. But lecturers can only be as good as the colleges that they work in; they need the support of management and the financial and physical structures to enable them to do their jobs as well as they want to.

I may have an impact on the lives of 50 students a year, but principals and their colleges impact on thousands of individuals every year. I am a great believer in doing a job that makes a difference. Becoming an FE principal is the ideal way for me to have the biggest impact on the greatest number of people that I possibly can, in a sector that I am passionate about.

In a recent edition of *FE Week*, Mike Hopkins talked about how tough the job is, but surely that is a given? Any position at the head of a large organisation isn’t going to be easy. Yes, there are challenges of accountability and measurement of performance, but these processes and procedures are there to ensure that provision is of a high quality.

I am surprised that fewer people are ap-

plying for principal posts. I can only imagine that in a society where leaders must be held fully accountable and where downfalls are accelerated by the media, potential principals are wary of losing what they have worked so hard to achieve if they are judged not to be meeting expectations.

“The brightest and most ambitious staff should be supported by a sector-wide structure to enable them to focus their careers on future leadership”

The Principals’ Professional Council report, Further Education Colleges: Rising to the leadership challenge, suggested that there are “concerns regarding a lack of new talent coming through . . . something should be done to encourage more vice-principals and

verting to the idea of apprenticeships.

Plymouth Council, winners of the ‘awareness raising’ final, held jobs’ fairs, open days, business breakfasts and VQ Day events to spread the word about how apprenticeships help young people to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and a real future.

The teams also generated hundreds of pieces of media coverage. Burnley Borough Council’s team even persuaded journalist and commentator Alastair Campbell to turn his blog over to apprenticeships, while Innovia took over BBC Radio Cumbria for the day with one apprentice presenting its

Breakfast Show.

The £35,000 that the teams raised for charity is an amazing sum. Team BCTS raised money for guide dogs; Cobham for Help for Heroes; while other teams worked with a range of local hospices and food banks.

This community activity has impressed us so much at NAS that we asked the apprentices at the finals to come up with recommendations to look at how we can ensure more young people and apprentices get more involved in their local areas — we’re looking forward to their report due in the autumn.

Finally, what do the teams get out of the challenge?

Members of each team had to demonstrate the same work skills that they needed to be successful in their careers; the same skills that are valued by employers as the key to their success.

While we provided the toolkits, the structure and the setting for the challenge, the communication, teamwork, planning and logistical skills they had to develop will stay with competitors throughout their careers.

Time and time again during the six months of the challenge, we heard from teams how they had developed as individuals and as a group

While the Brathay Challenge may ultimately recognise one team, employers, communities and individuals have all benefited.

deputies to aspire to become principals.”

That is not enough. We need to look beyond senior management and encourage middle management and lecturers.

The brightest and most ambitious staff should be supported by a sector-wide structure to enable them to focus their careers on future leadership

Rather than staff relying on their own colleges to ensure that their continuing professional development (CPD) is relevant to their future aims, wouldn’t it make sense for wider programmes of development, akin to those in finance and business or the public sector, as in the Prison Service?

In terms of my own development, I have a supportive line manager who is aware of my ambitions and who is helping me to find ways of accessing CPD relevant to my future goal. I have also used Twitter (#futureprincipal) and a blog to open up the conversation with others, and through that have had offers of guidance and mentorship from chief executives, principals and deputies.

My #futureprincipal journey has just begun. I have yet to gain any prolonged management experience, but every expert was once a beginner. Maybe that is a concept we should consider in the discussion of developing future leaders.

Nikki Gilbey teaches at Highbury College, Portsmouth.



It is not the only challenge we have to look forward to. At the beginning of July, our best young apprentices and employees will compete as Team UK at WorldSkills against the ‘best of the best’ from all over the world. This is our opportunity to show how talented our young people are — and that can only be good for the future and the quality of apprenticeships.

For a report on this year’s contest, page 10

David Way, executive director, National Apprenticeship Service



Brathay Challenge

# A battle against each other and the elements

Eight teams compete in the Lake District for top honours in a national contest for apprentices

Eleanor Radford  
@EleanorRadford

Scores of youngsters descended on the Lake District last week to take part in the grueling finals of a national competition aimed at boosting the profile of apprenticeships. Eight teams from as far afield as Plymouth, Norwich and Burnley rowed, paddled and orienteered against each other — and the elements — in the grounds of Brathay Hall in Ambleside. The two-day Brathay Challenge was the culmination of six months’ hard work in which the teams raised funds and visited schools to promote vocational learning. More than 90 teams entered the competition, now in its second year, which is organised by the Brathay Trust charity and supported by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

“Everyone was apprehensive. But we stepped it up a gear . . . it was great team building”

A team of engineers from Innovia Films, Cumbria, were this year’s victors, fighting off stiff competition from last year’s winners, Cobham who were pushed into joint second place with Norse Group. “I cannot put into words how happy I’m feeling right now,” said Aidan Harrison, 20, a member of the winning team. “We didn’t think we’d do this well — it’s incredible.” The electrical engineering apprentice from Wigton said that his team took the charity ele-

ment “very seriously”, winning the round with a race night and auction that netted £6,275. “Winning or not we were so proud to raise that much,” he added. Teammate Sam Ogle, 19, also from Wigton, said: “We raised money for a heart machine for a hospital in Newcastle after my mum had surgery there. It meant a lot to me.” Other teams came from East Midlands Housing Group, Unilever, Plymouth City Council, Burnley Borough Council, and BCTS, a team from small Norwich businesses trained by Broadland Council Training Services. Between them they raised £34,000 for charity and made around 300 school visits. Jaïne Bolton, NAS director, said: “The real point of this event is to showcase what apprenticeships can do. To get out the message about the diversity of the young people involved. The community work they have all done is amazing.” Plymouth apprentices topped the awareness-raising element with a careers’ fair. Other teams went along to school assemblies while some held CV workshops. Although Cobham was the first side to power over the finish line of the whaler boat race — a nail-biting final element, fought in driving rain — Unilever was the victor after the team picked up bonus points for strategically stopping at markers along the way. Alex Hunt, 19, a Unilever chemistry apprentice, said: “Everyone was really apprehensive until we got into a rhythm — but then we really stepped it up a gear. It was a great team-building exercise.” Godfrey Owen, chief executive of the Brathay Trust, said: “The competition was of a high standard this year and we are pleased to recognise Innovia Films as the apprentice team of the year.” Skills Minister Matthew Hancock said: “The competitors in this year’s challenge are an asset to their companies and an inspiration to other young people.”



Jaïne Bolton: “The community work they’ve done is amazing”



The Burnley Borough Council’s canoe crew



Young engineers from Innovia Films, this year’s winning squad

## Eleanor Radford goes on the ropes at this year’s Brathay Challenge

As Team Cobham’s war cry echoes around the shores of Lake Windermere you’d be forgiven for thinking a herd of stags is in the surrounding woods. Not lads on a pre-wedding weekend or on tour, but a herd of the real stuff. Their macho call “ouwooo”, shouted in unison, makes me realise how seriously these young apprentices are taking this competition. Armed with megaphones and some wearing false moustaches, the support teams are pretty ferocious, too. Innovia Films, for instance, has chartered a yacht where executives loll, cheering on their team. I am in the Lake District to catch up with the teams and “have a go” at the challenges they face on the two-day Brathay Challenge final. It is relentless. Two days of orienteering in the Lake District fells while attempting challenges such as balancing 14 nails on top of a single one. How does anyone do that? Then there are gruelling stints of rowing, canoeing, and balancing on high wires, all between non-physical activities such as assembling puzzles and guiding each other through tests, blind-folded, into the night. It doesn’t stop . . . breaks are used to plan strategies for the next stage.

Elliott Dobbs, 19, from Marlow and a member of the Cobham team, takes me under his wing to have a go on the high Vs, a tight rope strung about 30ft up in trees. We scramble up rungs on a pole, then hold hands and lean against each other to prevent ourselves falling off. We are in harnesses, but it is nerve-racking stuff. The electrical engineer immediately puts me at ease, guiding me along as his teams mates calmly shout tips of support. We complete it, almost. What comes through strongly is how friendly and open all these apprentices are. I’m not sure that I’ve come across such a self-assured, confident, bubbly, yet professional, group of young adults. And I believe this comes from the vocational pathway that they have chosen. Gregg Black, a customer service apprentice from Plymouth City Council, tells me that his apprenticeship. “I did other jobs, I tried college, I tried a degree but it didn’t work for me,” says the 23-year-old. “What worked for me was learning skills while doing the job.” The tension mounts before the final results are read out. Proudly defending their title as last year’s winners, Elliott says Cobham is “gutted” to come joint second to Innovia. But after the trophies are given out to jubilant cheers, everyone shakes hands and heads back to work.



Innovia after the whaler boat race



Cobham takes it easy after crossing the finishing line first in the whaler boat race



Eleanor Radford interviews Gregg Black . . .



. . . and takes to the trees (right) with Elliott Dobbs



## AELP national conference 2013

# Event proves a piece of cake

Shane Mann

@ShanerMann

More than 500 delegates attended the 11th national conference of the Association for Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), described as a “terrific” two days by outgoing chief executive Graham Hoyle.

The event in London was chaired by Chris Humphries CBE, the chairman of National Numeracy and the founding chief executive of the UK Commission for Employment Skills.

Half the *FE Week* team was there to meet the challenge of producing a 16-page supplement covering the conference's first day, which included the launch of a ‘mini-manifesto’ and a speech from incoming AELP chief executive Stewart Segal (pictured below centre).

It was put together from a hotel room, and printed in time for the gala dinner. A copy is included with this week's full edition.

The 2013 conference focused on sharing best practice between providers, emerging policy positions and extensive question and answer sessions. The conference also addressed issues such as improving support for young people in challenging economic times, better integration of employment and skills provision for the unemployed, and improving providers' delivery to employers and learners.

Delegates also had the chance to hear about the development of the Education Training Foundation, formerly known as the FE Guild, and to debate the possible devolution of skills budgets to local employer partnerships (LEPs). Doug Richard fielded questions on the government's response to his review on apprenticeships.

Day one ended with the annual gala dinner. Following a three-course meal, delegates were treated to a ‘This is Your Life’ tribute to Mr Hoyle. Presented by Paul Warner, contributions were made by the likes of Peter Lauener, chief executive of the Education Funding Agency, and Geoff Russell, former chief executive of the Skills Funding Agency, who submitted a video message recorded while he was in Bulgaria.

There were also performances from DrumChasers and this year's Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist, magician James More.

*FE Week* editor Nick Linford gave an impromptu performance alongside DrumChaser (pictured), surprising many with his drumming skills.

“The conference was a terrific illustration in how far AELP has come as an organisation in the past 10 years”

It was the last conference for Mr Hoyle who retires this August after 11 years at the helm. To mark his farewell, *FE Week* commissioned our baker in Sydenham, London, to bake a special cake (see picture). The chief executive was presented with his cake, which featured a cartoon from our March 4 edition when we published news of Mr Hoyle's retirement, during lunch on the second day.

He spoke to *FE Week* following the conference. “I have had a word with my wife about the supply of some of the photographs for the This is Your Life segment at the dinner,” he said.

“More seriously, I was greatly touched by both the tribute at the dinner and the other ones offered by speakers and AELP members throughout the conference.

The conference was a terrific illustration in how far AELP has come as an organisation in the past 10 years and I look forward to watching Stewart and the board building on the progress achieved.”

Mr Segal said: “I was particularly impressed by the high quality of the speakers. The publication of our manifesto also gave the event some real focus in terms of gathering members' views on the policy recommendations listed in it.

“This provides a great basis for us to move forward as we start to flesh out the detail. It is really important that AELP members continue to give us feedback on the recommendations.”

Graham Hoyle cutting his *FE Week* cartoon cake with editor Nick LinfordThe *FE Week* team at the end of the AELP conference gala dinner. From left: Rebecca Cooney, Helen Neilly, Shane Mann, Eleanor Radford, Hannah Smith, Victoria Boyle, Chris Henwood and (front) Nick Linford

See the AELP national conference supplement for more

## FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by **empra**

### Kate signs up for new apprenticeship



Kate Veitch has become the first social media apprentice

A 21-year-old from the North East has become the first person to enrol on a 12 to 18-month apprenticeship in social media and digital marketing.

Kate Veitch, 21, from Gateshead, will cover search engine optimisation and website design, as well as techniques for marketing a business through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

“I'm really interested in the marketing

side of running a business so this course is perfect for me,” said Kate.

The apprenticeship, run by Access Training, will lead to a level three diploma in social media for business.

Managing director of Access Training Malcolm Armstrong said: “There is a requirement for businesses to recruit employees that are keen to work in this area and to develop these skills.”

### Students show what they're made of



From left: Barking &amp; Dagenham College student Latifat Akande 57, fashion course leader, Jo Price, and fellow student Anisah Yasrin, 16

London fashion students displayed their talents on a market stall at a new designer street market in Soho.

The Barking & Dagenham College fashion students sold a range of textile accessories they had made over the past few months at the market that aimed to bring together all of London's creative talents in one place.

Anisah Yasrin, 16, from Manor Park, said: “Being at the market was a great experience. I enjoyed communicating with customers,

seeing what they were looking at and what they wanted to buy.”

Items for sale included necklaces, soft toys, bags, cushion covers, key rings and summer scarves. The group took more than £200 on the day.

College art and design curriculum manager Gail Glazier said: “It gave them the opportunity to not only showcase their fashion and textile skills but also helped them to gain more entrepreneurial skills.”



From left: Andrew Cummings, 26 Natalie Rogers, 20 Anthony Peacock, 20 and Shannon Duce, 18 are among the first students to take part in the new NVQ level two gambling operations course at Middlesbrough College

### Playing their cards right on new course

Students in North East England are odds-on favourites to win careers in the casino industry after completing a new course.

Middlesbrough College's first level two gambling operations cohort will celebrate its achievement at a glittering event at the Riverside Stadium, demonstrating their new croupier skills to invited guests from Middlesbrough FC, Middlesbrough College and the gaming industry.

The students range from 18-year-olds with

no work experience to a former soldier and a former businessman.

They spent six weeks learning how to oversee games of poker, blackjack and roulette and applying for their licence to work as a croupier.

Middlesbrough College head of business development for service industries Anthony O'Donnell said: “It's been an amazing six weeks and everyone has thoroughly enjoyed it — the course has opened the door to a new life for many of the students.”



Top performing students got to know each other at the Wimbledon-themed Big Lunch

### ‘Big lunch’ offers chance to make new friends

A students' union in Nottingham served up a Wimbledon themed lunch to 150 people to celebrate the hard work of some of its top students.

Each school of learning at West Nottinghamshire College nominated its 15 top achieving students to attend a ‘Big Lunch’ buffet that featured a guest magician, free drinks and food — including, traditional Wimbledon strawberries and cream.

The ‘Big Lunch’, which started at the Eden

Project in 2009, aims to get people to have lunch with their neighbours to promote community, friendship and fun.

Learner voice co-ordinator Sue Harries said: “The atmosphere was fantastic and everyone had fun and enjoyed each other's company and the entertainment.

“It proved to be a great chance for students from different schools of learning to meet people they've never met before . . . there was a wonderful sense of camaraderie.”

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable



# FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by **empira**



Business Secretary Vince Cable with Michael Clough, 18

## Ministerial visit for Warwickshire College

Business Secretary Vince Cable dropped in on students at Warwickshire College to see how they are minding their own business. Dr Cable visited enterprise and entrepreneurship students working towards a diploma at the college's Peter Jones Enterprise Academy (PJEA) as well as meeting students from construction, plumbing and carpentry. Student Phoebe Cowley, 18, from Rugby, said: "Dr Cable asked about my business, which is called Glow All Out, providing products for festivals.

"I told him how the PJEA course has really supported me, given me ideas and experience and even helped me to change my business model to improve it." Dr Cable also visiting the college's Power Academy, which trains engineers in power generation manufacturing. "It is good to see a college giving people the key skills and training to help build a balanced, sustainable economy," said Mr Cable.

## Stepping out to boost hospice funds



The eight South Cheshire College staff who are planning a 13.1-mile walk later this month

College staff members will be putting their best foot forward to raise money for St Luke's Cheshire Hospice, by taking part in a midnight walk. Eight employees from South Cheshire College's exams, finance and administration teams will join hundreds of other fundraisers on the ladies-only 13.1-mile walk that follows a route from Nantwich to Crewe and back again, starting at midnight on June 29. Student data officer Lindsay Dunnin, who is co-ordinating the team, said: "We are all looking forward to taking part in the event that raises money for such an excellent local cause and is close to the hearts of some of the ladies involved. "I've thoroughly enjoyed taking part in previous events but I know the rest of the team is looking forward to being part of the walk for the first time." This year's midnight walk marks the 25th anniversary of care at St Luke's Cheshire Hospice.

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Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

## Pop-up shop inspires volunteers



Hopwood Hall students chose a heritage theme for their pop-up shop

Hopwood Hall College students in Rochdale demonstrated their flair for retail by setting up a pop-up shop, and designing merchandise to celebrate the town's heritage. The learners volunteered for a three-day residential scheme, run by the college, vnspired — a volunteering charity for young people — and the Retail Trust, to gain hands-on retail experience. Health and social care student Nahida Abasi, 17, said: "It has been a fantastic experience, I didn't know what business was about before I joined. "The programme has taught me so much and I've really had a great time." The students came up with the heritage theme and the idea of producing t-shirts, tote bags, tea towels and posters. They then enlisted the help of local artists to help them with designs and to find their premises.

## Proving that nothing can beat home cooking



Chef, Nelson Domebele

Surrey catering student cooked up a storm to be one of ten finalists for the 2013 Jamie Oliver Home Cooking Skills competition. Carshalton College level one hospitality services student Nelson Domebele,18, created 'a meal for family and friends', whipping up spaghetti bolognese with garlic bread followed by a chocolate dessert. Nelson said: "I chose catering after being inspired by my mum and grandmother — I just enjoy being in the kitchen, it feels like home. "Working in a kitchen means you have to be fired up and always focused." The finalists will have their dishes judged by Jamie Oliver, with the winner due to be announced today. The winner will receive £50-worth of cookware, vouchers to dine at one of Jamie Oliver's restaurant and will have their recipe posted on his blog. Tutor Sandra Marshall said: "Nelson is a passionate student who works hard... taking every task to heart to produce the best."

# 'We wanted other designers to be inspired by Sophie'

An award at the Cleveland College of Art and Design remembers an outstanding student who always thought of others. Rebecca Cooney reports

A young designer in Derbyshire has won a college award dedicated to a former student who lost her battle with breast cancer last year. Cleveland College of Art and Design (CCAD) student Charlotte Hall, 18, is the first recipient of the Sophie Cutts Excellence Award for her textile designs based on butterflies. Former textile student Sophie Cutts died last September, aged 21. Her parents Tracy and Craig, with her tutor Lynne Carverhill, dedicated an award in tribute to her talent and commitment to her studies. "We were thinking we would like to have an award . . . and then Lynne got in touch as she was thinking along the same lines," said Tracy. "The big thing for all of us was that she was so young and so talented, and had a lot to give from her own ideas of design." After completing her studies at CCAD, Sophie went on to Edinburgh's Heriot-Watt University. Her family collected her first-class degree on Friday. "After her diagnosis and although she was poorly, she still had the commitment," said Tracy. "She finished her third year of university while having chemotherapy and after a huge operation and... was still focused, still excited about design. "We wanted other designers to be inspired by



Winner Charlotte Hall with Craig, Tracy and Jacob Cutts. Right: Sophie Cutts with her partner, Paul Thomson

Sophie; to follow their dreams even through the depths of darkness. "We thought it would be nice to recognise somebody who had her qualities. It's a nice way of saying to someone 'you're really good at designs, you're a really good human being and your attitude to work is exceptional'." Charlotte, from Darlington, won the award for a final year project that the college said showed the same quality, commitment and attention to detail as Sophie's. "I was genuinely shocked because there was so much amazing work," said Charlotte, who hopes to become an interior designer. "It is a real honour to receive the award." Lynne Carverhill said: "We felt we wanted to do something to celebrate the life and work of Sophie as she was a truly outstanding student.

## Social enterprise offers prisoners a future



Prison and college staff show off the prisoners' work

Prisoners at Eastwood Park women's prison in Gloucestershire are learning to make luxury soap as part of a social enterprise. The scheme, launched by Weston College, employs eight women to design and manufacture the soap to help to prepare them for life after they are released. One of the prisoners, who cannot be named, said: "This is the best course that the prison has offered. "It gives us real skills that we can use when we leave prison and potentially it will enable us to set up our own business." She added that when the four-week course ended, she hoped to stay on to help other prisoners to learn. The soap is sold to prison officers and staff at Weston College, but it is hoped the women may be able to create a business selling in people's homes on their release. Tutor Ian Rampton said: "The ladies finish the course passionate and excited, developing the belief that they can do something for themselves."



Lazy Bake creator Mathew Whelan, 24 and Mike Fort, 22

## Muffin can stop this baking duo

Two entrepreneurial students in Yorkshire have whipped up a tasty business idea which they are marketing to fellow students. Lancaster and Morecambe College students Mathew Whelan and Mike Fort took the idea of the simple but messy method of microwaving a brownie in a mug and created the Lazy Bake, which gets rid of washing up by providing a sachet of brownie mix in a bio-degradable container, so all it needs is water and a drop of oil. "The Lazy Bake started initially because it is something we enjoy," said Mike. "Students like food that tastes good and is quick and simple to prepare, and our product fits that description." Mathew is heading to university in September, but the duo said they see this as "an opportunity". Mike said: "We are talking with a few local shops about stocking Lazy Bake, but our ultimate aim is to have our product on the shelves at university campuses."



## Crumbs! That’s how to do it



Pam White with Hero the Bear and Warrington Collegiate students

Raising money for charity was a piece of cake for public service students near Manchester.

The Warrington Collegiate services students raised more than £80 for the ‘Peace of Cake’ campaign for the Peace Centre, which works to support victims of terrorism and their families.

The students were thanked by mascot

Hero the Bear and former police officer Pam White, who was caught up in the 1983 IRA bombing of Harrods, and who now works with the charity.

Pam said the charity was “delighted” by the students’ efforts.

She added: “As well as enjoying some really nice cakes they raised a fantastic amount of money.”

## Film gives an insider’s view of care sector



Lindsay Giess in the NAS film that encourages young people into the care sector

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) has launched a film to encourage more young people into apprenticeships in the care sector.

The film features four current and former apprentices working in different roles across the sector discussing how an apprenticeship has benefited them.

Lindsay Giess, 32, who features in the film, completed an advanced apprenticeship in health and social care and is now a senior carer at a residential home.

She said: “I knew for quite a while that I wanted to work in this sector but I wasn’t sure of the best way to go about it.

“Being an apprentice meant from the outset I was doing exactly what I wanted to do – [it] is one of the best decisions I ever made.”

Care employers are being encouraged to promote the film across the sector and to young people, and it will also be used by NAS as a resource for schools and careers events.

To see the film, visit [apprentice.tv](http://apprentice.tv)



Would-be pin-ups Sam Folkes and Charlie Barber

## Carpenters do it by the book

Young carpenters in Sussex have posed for the illustrations in two new textbooks.

Central Sussex College carpentry and joinery students Sam Folkes, 18, Charlie Barber, 17, and Shaun Scofield, 18, will feature in the City & Guilds textbooks due to be published later this year, after the college was approached to provide workshops and models for the project.

Level one student Sam said: “It’s quite exciting to think we’re going to be in a textbook that will be seen by thousands of students up and down the country.”

Charlie said: “I was nervous at the start of the day, but I got used to the cameras — I can’t wait to get a copy of the book to see what the photos look like.”



Students will use the theatre’s front-of-house area for their performances

## Dancers inspired by the works of Shakespeare

All the world’s a stage for Stratford-upon-Avon college dance students who will dance outside the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) as pre-show entertainment.

The BTec level three dance students have devised a site-specific performance that is inspired by Shakespeare’s sonnets and uses the floors, pillars, staircases and walls of the theatre’s front-of-house areas.

College dance lecturer Laura Dredger said: “It’s a unique and exciting opportunity for the students to explore and perform in such a historic and world-famous venue.

“We are lucky to have this opportunity and we would like to thank the RSC.”

The dancers will be entertaining theatre-goers before Thursday and Friday’s productions of A Mad World My Masters, As You Like It and Hamlet.

Struan Leslie, head of movement at the RSC, said: “We have had a great time sharing our knowledge and skills in movement.

“It has been highly rewarding watching the students’ work develop from these ideas.”

# Jobs

TAKE THINGS UP A LEVEL

**Principal & Chief Executive, Sandwell College** £competitive plus relocation

With a recently opened £80 million campus bringing together the three former sites of Oldbury, Smethwick and West Bromwich, you may be forgiven for thinking that Sandwell College had achieved what it set out to do. In fact this is just the start of the journey. Our focus is on the future and how we can make the most of our fantastic resources to be a central part of our community and its economy. If you’ve taken your current role as far as you can, this is a career defining opportunity.

We are committed to continued growth, diversifying our offer to students and creating new opportunities and revenue streams. Nurturing existing productive relationships and building new partnerships with regional employers and stakeholders will be a key priority. Our aspirations for growth must be rooted in high quality provision and a keen focus on the financial health of the College.

You will be a results oriented, experienced leader with a proven track record in delivering change and a strategic awareness of the FE sector and the vision to ensure the College plays a full role in economic and skills development within the communities we serve. Commercially aware, you’ll have good political judgement and be a strong ambassador for the College in a range of settings. Most importantly, you’ll be able to balance the strategic aspirations of the College with careful attention to sustaining and improving performance.

For more information, please visit [www.sandwellprincipal.co.uk](http://www.sandwellprincipal.co.uk) or contact Trudy Searle or Mike Galloway at Navigate on 07791 090141 / 07765 595758.

Closing date: 5 July. Longlist interviews: 12, 15 & 16 July.  
Final interviews: 16 & 17 September.

**navigate**

**CentralCampus**  
Sandwell College

Do you want to be the next inspiring leader of Cornwall College?

**Chief Executive Officer and Principal**

Cornwall College is one of the largest further and higher education colleges in the UK and plays a pivotal role in the social and economic development of the county.

We are looking for an exceptional individual with a proven track record of transformational and entrepreneurial leadership in a senior role. You must have a passion for excellence in learning and teaching with the desire and ability to improve quality and inclusivity. You will have an impressive history of building sustainable partnerships and delivering commercial success.

You should be an outstanding inspirational leader who can provide strategic direction to achieve excellence. Set in one of the most beautiful parts of the country, this is a rare opportunity to become a key player in one of the largest, most diverse and forward thinking colleges in the country.

**Salary: will be commensurate with the skills and experience of the successful candidate.**

For an information pack and application form please email [clerk@cornwall.ac.uk](mailto:clerk@cornwall.ac.uk). For an informal discussion please call Steve Burgess, Human Resources Director on 07767 870 438 or Debbie Wilshire, Deputy Chief Executive on 07768 468 839.

**Closing Date: 12 noon, Friday 28th June 2013**

Cornwall College is an equal opportunities employer. All disabled applicants meeting minimum job criteria will be invited to interview.

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**CORNWALL COLLEGE**

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Closing date: 12 noon on Monday 8 July 2013.



## Executive Director – Commercial Development

Leeds • Salary: Up to £105k (including PRP)

Established in 2009, Leeds City College is one of the largest and most successful further education colleges in the sector, with over 1,700 staff, 40,000 students and an annual group turnover of over £90 million. As one of the most exciting and innovative colleges in the sector, Leeds City College is at the forefront of its local and regional agendas and is a significant national influencer.

Reporting to the Chief Executive, and a key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the Executive Director – Commercial Development will be responsible for strategic direction, business planning, and development of the organisation’s employer engagement and overall “commercialisation” strategy.

You will work across all areas of the business providing inspired and insightful leadership to capitalise on the College’s current reputation and its existing product portfolio, while creating new commercial opportunities, including partnerships, which will optimise both revenues and profitability.

This is an exciting appointment for a high performance individual responsible for developing the College’s commercial strategy with a strong emphasis on identifying business growth opportunities and implementing initiatives that deliver successful outcomes. For further details and to apply, please visit [www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk/jobs) or contact HR Operations on 0113 216 2092.

Closing date: 5 July 2013  
Interviews will be held w/c 15 July or 22 July 2013

Leeds City College celebrates diversity. We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. If successful you will be required to complete an enhanced DBS check.

All applicants will be treated fairly irrespective of race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. The college actively welcomes applications from all sections of the community.



## FIFE COLLEGE CREATE THE FUTURE



Fife College will be fully established on 1 August 2013. Defined by its location in Fife, and building on the success of the previous colleges, the new college will sustain a national & international reputation.

The new Vice Principal roles are pivotal. They have responsibility for keynote functional areas &, along with the new Principal, Hugh Logan, will form the new Executive Team. The roles offer immense professional satisfaction & we expect that the individuals appointed, already leaders in their fields, are motivated by the prospect of future career progression.

### Vice Principal Curriculum

Salary c.£90k

You will have an exceptional understanding of the dynamics of curriculum, standing out as a leader in the field. The ability to understand how excellence is sustained will be built on an appreciation of the importance of information systems. You will relate to all staff involved in curriculum delivery with an understanding of quality enhancement & issues involved in curriculum shift. Awareness of curriculum delivery & anticipation of change will require you to build strong relationships with all divisions of the college.

### Vice Principal Finance & Planning

Salary c.£80k

You will provide strategic & operational advice to the college on its financial performance, based on sophisticated & reliable data. Possessing an appropriate professional qualification, you will advise the Board & all relevant budget-holders. Highly systems literate, you will interpret the implications of external policy shifts, have an important relationship with funding bodies & acute awareness of commercial income streams. The development of a high performing finance team will be vital. The person appointed will have responsibility also for producing & up-dating the college’s estates strategy.

### Vice Principal Organisational Change & Development

Salary c.£80k

You will play a leading role initially in the formation of the new college, ensuring synergy & effectiveness of infrastructure, systems & facilities. At this time of critical change & organisational development, you will be a catalyst in the development of a new college culture & identity. You will have proven communication skills, and will reach out to all internal stakeholders, putting robust strategies, processes & structures in place. The role will involve leadership of functional areas (initially ICT, Estates, HR) to ensure that the college makes best use of its resources and that its resource base is capable of supporting the highest levels of performance.

### Vice Principal Commercial Development

Salary c.£80k

You will have an impressive track-record of sustainable income generation & will build on considerable success to date. We expect you to inculcate a culture of commercial awareness throughout the college to establish dependable income streams with scope for growth. We require you to alert the college to market opportunities & to develop significant bi-lateral relationships with major businesses.

A candidate pack for each post, including relevant documentation & details of how to apply, can be obtained through the link: [www.edenscott.com/fifecollege](http://www.edenscott.com/fifecollege)  
Precise final interview dates are in the candidate pack.



The college is being assisted in this recruitment process by edenscott. Interested candidates are invited to have an informal discussion with:

**Alan Walter** Head of Executive Search  
0131 550 1148 / 07584 676 007 / [alan.walter@edenscott.com](mailto:alan.walter@edenscott.com)

**Bill Wardle** Principal Consultant  
0131 550 1112 / 07777642100 / [william.wardle@edenscott.com](mailto:william.wardle@edenscott.com)



www.bowlingcollege.co.uk

## Principal and Chief Executive

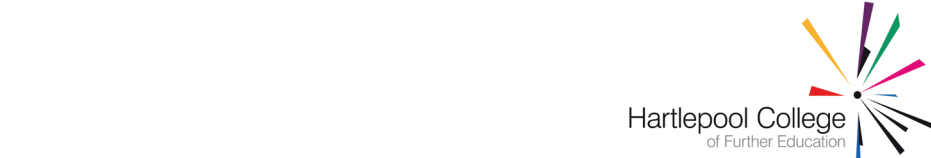
£35,000 - £40,000

Bowling College are looking for a talented and determined individual to provide effective and inspiring leadership for the College.

Job Description and Person Specification are available on the College website: [www.bowlingcollege.co.uk](http://www.bowlingcollege.co.uk)

Closing Date: 24th June 2013

Applicants should return a CV for the attention of the board of directors to [enquiries@bowlingcollege.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bowlingcollege.co.uk)



## Appointment of Full-Time Lecturers

Salaries competitive, dependent on qualifications

Hartlepool College is looking for talented individuals to join us and help achieve our aspiration of being an excellent College. We have the following opportunities for Lecturers in these required areas:

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**LECTURER IN MATHEMATICS (TWO POSTS)**  
**LECTURER IN SCIENCE/CHEMISTRY**  
**LECTURER IN ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE**  
**LECTURER IN ENGINEERING**  
**LECTURER IN AEROSPACE ENGINEERING**  
**LECTURER IN PROCESS ENGINEERING**



For application forms please see our website [www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk/jobvacancies](http://www.hartlepoolfe.ac.uk/jobvacancies)

Applications must be received by **28th June 2013**

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First interviews will be held on 4 July 2013

[go to ncfe.org.uk/careers](http://go.to.ncfe.org.uk/careers) to find out more



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## FE Week Sudoku challenge

				4		9	2	
		4					6	7
2			9					1
4	8		6					
			2		4			
					3		8	2
7					1			9
9	2					8		
	1	6		5				

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

		3				5		
4	6				7			2
8				2				
7			6		9			
	8		4		5		2	
			2		3			4
				3				7
6			7				4	5
		5				8		

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Last Week's solutions

7	8	3	9	2	6	1	5	4
1	5	4	7	8	3	2	9	6
6	9	2	5	4	1	3	7	8
2	3	5	8	1	4	7	6	9
8	7	1	3	6	9	4	2	5
9	4	6	2	7	5	8	1	3
5	1	8	6	3	2	9	4	7
3	2	9	4	5	7	6	8	1
4	6	7	1	9	8	5	3	2

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

4	5	7	8	1	9	2	6	3
2	8	9	3	7	6	4	5	1
6	3	1	4	2	5	9	7	8
7	2	4	1	9	3	6	8	5
1	6	8	7	5	2	3	4	9
5	9	3	6	4	8	1	2	7
9	1	5	2	8	4	7	3	6
3	7	2	5	6	1	8	9	4
8	4	6	9	3	7	5	1	2

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



*"Mostly this week I've been showing baby Tom how to sit in his new car seat"*

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford